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Information Outlook, November 2001

Special Libraries Association

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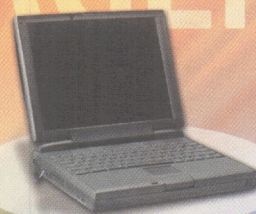
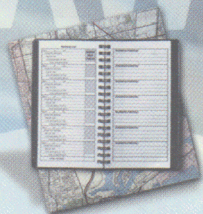
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vol. 5, no. 11
november 2001



client

THE
DAWN OF FREE AGENCY



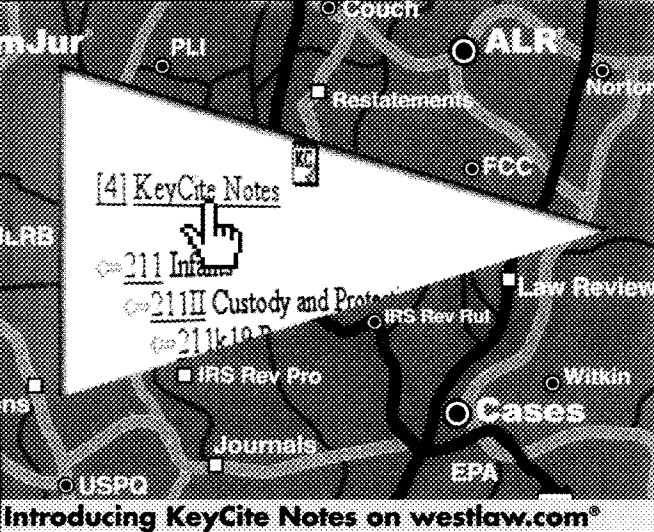
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inside this issue:

Free Agent: A Conversation with Dan Pink
Tree Shaker: Shaffer's Path to SLA Filled with Challenge and Change
Strategic Decision Making in a Time of Information Overload
Acknowledge and Celebrate!



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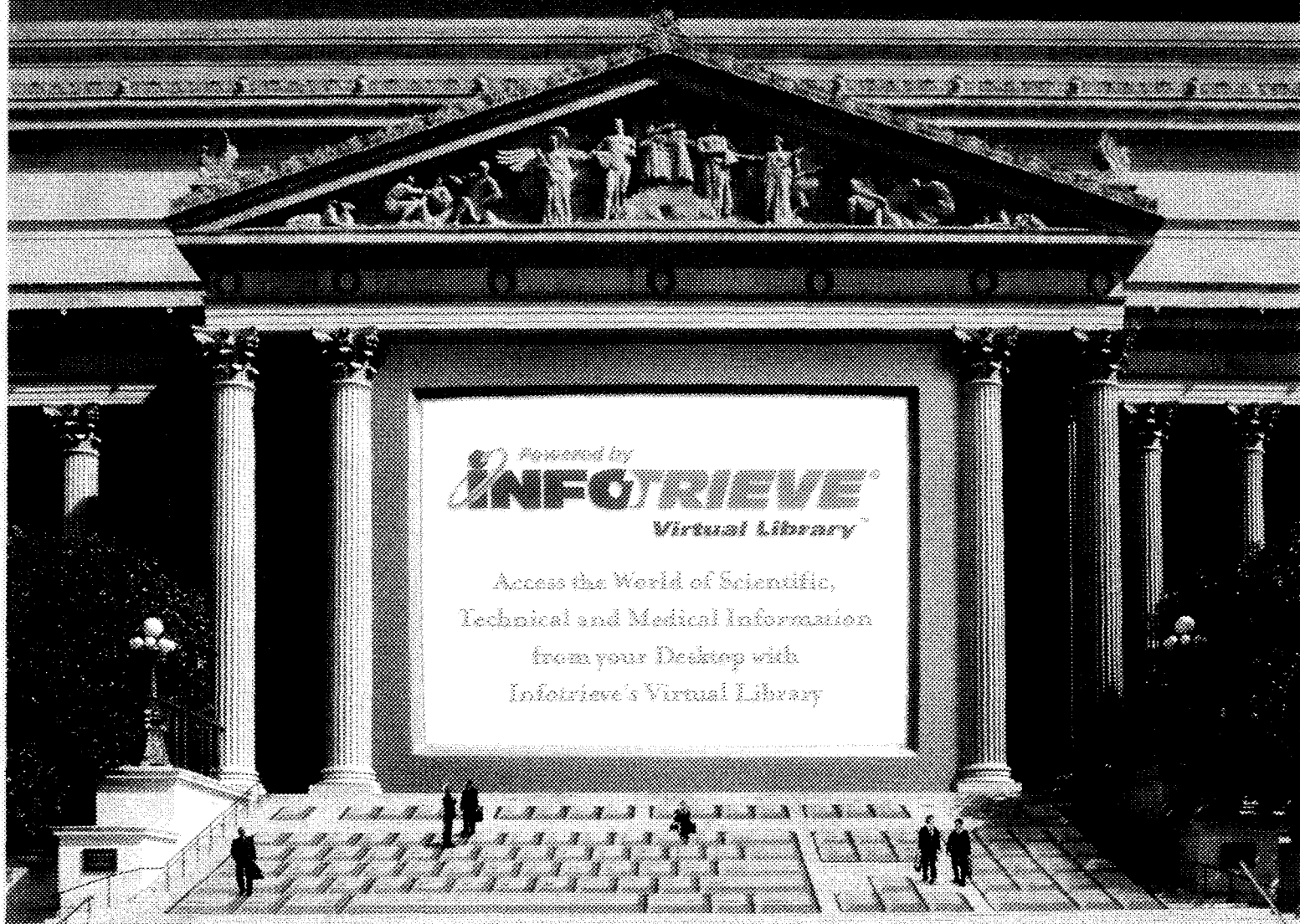
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Features

Free Agent: A Conversation with Dan Pink

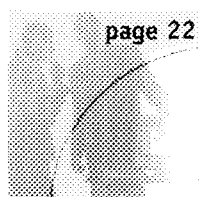
Just what is a free agent? In sporting parlance, it is a skilled athlete who has the luxury of selling his talents to the highest bidder. In business vernacular, it is someone who lives outside of the traditional "big corporation," selling a skill or product to businesses or the public as whole. Author Dan Pink detailed the phenomena of free agency in his recent book *Free Agent Nation*, studying all levels of free agents, from high-powered consultants to "mom and pop" shop owners. Pink took some time to sit down with Jeff De Cagna to talk about free agency and what it means to information professionals.



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Tree Shaker: Shaffer's Path to SLA Filled with Challenge and Change

Roberta Shaffer likes challenges. Throughout her career she has taken on difficult or new positions and started change. This happened at Coke, The Library of Congress, the governments of Portugal and Israel and, most recently, at The University of Texas. Now, settled into to her newest role as executive director at SLA, Shaffer talks about where she has been and where the association is going.



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Strategic Decision Making in a Time of Information Overload

Librarians are masters of their own domain. They can easily make decisions about reference and directional services, resource allocations, long range planning, facility optimization, and other things within their sphere. Yet, tightening budgets are forcing many companies to evaluate their libraries. To survive these inspections, a library must be able to prove its value to those in the outside world. Kathleen Begley Powe and Dr. Daniel Plung take a look at five internal and external principles libraries that must guide libraries.

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Call for Nominations:

ELECTION

The Nominating Committee for the SLA 2003 election needs your help to identify twelve worthy candidates who are ready and willing to lead the Association. All SLA members are vital to this nominating process!

Please let us know of colleagues willing to serve in any one of the following capacities: President-Elect, Treasurer, Chapter Cabinet Chair-Elect, Division Cabinet Chair-Elect, or Director. The slate for 2003 will contain the names of two candidates for each position except Director, which requires four names since two Directors are elected each year. More information on the nominating process and position descriptions can be found at, <http://www.sla.org/content/SLA/Structure/board-index/nominations/index.cfm>.

In helping us identify good candidates, consider qualities and experiences that make these people ideal candidates for the position(s) you are nominating them. Consider their views on our profession and how they might represent us. Please share other compelling considerations in your nominations. You are also urged to nominate yourself as a qualified candidate.

Please include the nominee's name, affiliation, address, phone number, and the position for which you are nominating him or her. Please also include information about nominee's positions previously held at the Chapter, Division, or Association level; the length of SLA service; as well as any other relevant information you have available. It will help the Committee if you can also tell us in what capacity you have served with each individual and how you can personally speak to his or her effectiveness.

Send your nominations by Monday, December 3, 2001 to: Barbara P. Semonche, Library Director, UNC-CH School of Journalism and Mass Communications, Carroll Hall, CB# 3365, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3365 USA. Fax: 1-919-962-0620. Email: semonch@metalab.unc.edu.

Or email any member of the Committee (also by December 3):

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*Look around you
and see whom you
should nominate for a
chapter/division or
association-wide award.*

Acknowledge and Celebrate!

It's always time for your voice to be heard. You have an important role to play in sharing information about what you are doing and about acknowledging and celebrating successes.

Look around you and see whom you should nominate for a chapter/division or association-wide award. Or consider what you have been doing, and nominate yourself. SLA has an annual awards and honors program, and the deadline for most association-level awards is December 7, 2001. Are you familiar with the awards SLA gives annually and the qualifications for each? See the forms and brochure on the SLA web site. The Hall of Fame Award recognizes a member who is at or near the end of an active professional career for distinguished service to the association.

But awards are not just for those nearing retirement. The Fellow of the Special Libraries Association award is bestowed to an individual member in recognition of leadership and outstanding contributions, as well as expected future service to the association. There is a wide range of awards—from the Innovations in Technology Award, given to a member for innovative use and application of technology, to the Media Award, given to an individual journalist who published an outstanding feature on the profession, to the Rose L. Vormelker Award, given to an individual member recognized for mentoring students or practicing professionals, to a number of others. Don't limit your nominations to association awards. Chapters and divisions have strong recognition programs as well. Feel free to suggest additional areas for recognition if you do not see one that you think should be there. What we acknowledge in our awards program demonstrates our values. Make sure your values are reflected by participating.

This is also a good time to recommend your choices for future leaders to the nominating committee.

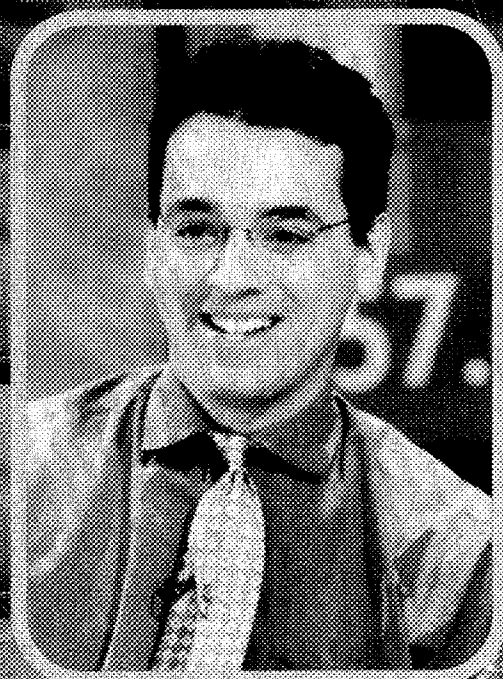
It is an exciting time to be an information professional. We are an association of very talented members who have a lot to offer. The value of our members' skill base and knowledge base is impressive. As an information professional, you are often in a position where you have the answers before anyone else around you. Don't hide under a bushel; speak up! Make sure you are heard and acknowledged.

Think of our future and what we need to reward to make sure it expands. Are we recognizing all the right things by our awards and honors program, or are we overlooking key contributions? Don't use traditional awards as our model, but think of what we should be rewarding and are missing now, as our world changes.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Hope N. Tillman

Hope N. Tillman, SLA President



Free Agent: A Conversation with Dan Pink

INTERVIEW

by Jeff De Cagna

Jeff De Cagna is managing director, Strategic Learning and Development for the Special Libraries Association. He may be reached at jeff@sla.org.

... Free Agency is the Future.

THE WORLD IS CHANGING. INSTEAD OF SPENDING AN ENTIRE CAREER with one organization, workers are now bouncing from one place to another and even working for themselves. If an employee has skills that the company values, this arrangement can be beneficial for both sides. The employee gets freedom, while the organization gets a task accomplished without paying insurance and other benefits.

Dan Pink, who recently wrote about this phenomena in his book *Free Agent Nation*, sat down with Jeff De Cagna to talk about these workers.

Jeff De Cagna: Can give us the thumbnail idea of the free agent nation? What are we talking about here?

Dan Pink: We are talking about a free agent—somebody who works un-tethered from a large organization as a free-lancer, an e-lancer, a self-employed professional, an independent professional, an independent contractor, a temp, an interim executive, or the proprietor of a very small business. About one out of four workers in the U.S. economy are free agents, and that is what we are talking about. Free agent nation is a universe of roughly 30 million people who are working in ways fundamentally different from the traditional form of employment.

JD: I know you have your own taxonomy of free agents. What does that mean?

DP: The way people are working is changing faster than our capacity to describe it or count it. Our vocabulary is racing to catch up with this. So I've created my own, albeit imperfect, taxonomy.

I found it useful to group free agents into three categories. The first would be what I call soloists—people who are classic free-lancers and migrate from project to project usually selling personal services.

The second category would be temps, people who work in interim positions for large organizations. Their jobs are usually mediated by some third party, such as a staffing agency or a temporary help firm. There are two kinds of temps. One kind is low-wage temps who tend to earn relative little money. Most of them want so-called permanent jobs. They are among the most disgruntled workers in the U.S. workforce.

At the other end of the spectrum are very high-end

temps—interim executives. There is an agency that places interim college presidents. There is an agency called CFOs to Go. It places interim chief financial officers.

I call the third category micro businesses. These are very, very small businesses. There are legions of businesses in this country that have fewer than five workers and sometimes just one or two employees. Seventy percent of business enterprises in America today have no paid employees. So I call these micro businesses.

An example would be Lindsay Frucci in Elkins, NH, who runs a company called No Pudge Fudge, which makes a no-fat brownie mix. She is a one-person operation. She is not selling services; she is selling a product. The company that produces it consists of her and her cat.

JD: Based on the work that you did for the book, what factors do you think set the table for the rise of free agency in the United States?

DP: One of them is the changed relationship between individuals in organizations. The social contract of work used to be that the organization would provide security and the individual would provide loyalty. Well, that bargain broke down in the late 1980's and early 1990's, and we have a fundamentally different bargain in which the individual trades talent for opportunity.

Another factor is technology. In the industrial economy, you needed large organizations to purchase, operate, and house the means of production—the tools necessary to create wealth. The free agent economy is sort of like Karl Marx's revenge. Workers now can own the means of production.

Another factor is that companies have shorter life spans and no one can promise lifetime employment, especially in a world where most of us will outlive any organization that we work for. So the distinction between what is a company and what is a project is getting murkier.

A final factor would be prosperity. As people witness prosperity around them, they want more than a paycheck. They want a sense of purpose. They want to do work that matters. They want to work with great people. Many folks are finding it easier to obtain that meaning by working for themselves.

JD: There is a prevalent belief that the people go out on their own to do things that large organizations are not equipped to do. Where did see that fitting as you were working on the book?

DP: I don't think that explains every case, but it has to do with people recognizing that they have something that someone else wants to buy. It is not as if someone says, "I have a great new way to do graphic design." It is simply, "I am a great graphic designer, and the market will reward me for that. In fact, the market will reward me for that much more robustly than an organization would reward me if I stayed on its staff."

Now, I think in some cases, you are absolutely right. Go back to the No Pudge Fudge woman. She had a great idea. She said, "You know what? Everybody loves brownies, but no one wants the high calorie content. How about a no-fudge brownie mix? It has been tried before, but no one has done it right. I have a lot of experience in the kitchen; I think I can do it right."

Bam, a magic formula! It is a great brownie mix and she has something to sell.

JD: What is the impact of the Web on all of this?

DP: I think it goes back to the means of production point. Suddenly these tools that allow you to reach the entire planet are accessible to tens of millions of people for a relatively low price.

If you think about technology in general, the amount of technological firepower that a single individual can marshal today is incredible. I mean, my home office probably

has more computing power than was on Apollo XI. A laptop computer today is more powerful than the big mainframes of only 20 years ago. It used to be that the only player who could get the tools would be organizations, and that is not true anymore. It is still tough to go toe to toe with a big company, but it is possible with these technologies.

JD: How should we think about the entry of women into the workforce as a factor in the rise of free agency?

DP: Well, I think it is a huge factor on a number of different dimensions. Free agency is the next chapter in the migration of women into the workforce. We didn't have women in the workforce in any large numbers until 25 or 30 years ago, and that first generation of women tried to play the same game that men were playing. I think a new generation of women are playing a very different game.

You really see this in the numbers. Women are becoming self-employed at 12 times the rate of men. Women are starting small businesses at an incredible clip—far faster than men. For many women, I think traditional corporate structures are uninviting, unfulfilling, and not something of which they want to be part.

There are many women who have hit the glass ceiling and decided to leave, but I think there are many more who see the glass ceiling, see what is above it, and say "I don't even want to go there, anyway." Instead of hitting the glass ceiling, they go out the side door.

I think that free agency offers people an easier way to reconcile the demands of work and the obligations of family, and I think that even in the most enlightened households, those demands press women more heavily than they press men.

I also think that the skills required to thrive in a free agent economy—particularly building relationships, nurturing relationships, and maintaining relationships—are the sorts of skills that women are usually better at than men.

FREE AGENT NATION

How America's New
Independent Workers
Are Transforming
the Way We Live

DANIEL H. PINK



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JD: How is free agency changing or impacting the way we understand networks, communities, and the whole notion of social capital?

DP: I think that free agency creates a richer and more robust form of social capital. I am not sure whether the traditional workplace—where people inherit all of their

to really think hard about whether you are able to sell something that others want to buy. The third thing is the skills and connections you have because those are the two really make-or-break elements of free agency.

JD: What is the most surprising thing that you learned as you were preparing the book?

“If you think about technology in general, the amount of technological firepower that a single individual can marshal today is incredible. I mean, my home office probably has more computing power than was on Apollo XI.”

contacts, inherit all of their colleagues, don't make a conscious decision about who to affiliate with, and are forced into arrangements with people—is the best way to foster social capital. It is not a bad way to foster social capital, but I do think it is clear that social capital is essential for a society or an economy to thrive.

There are misconceptions that free agency erodes social capital in some ways, and I really think that is fundamentally wrong. I think that free agency actually fosters a much more robust form of social capital. That is why you have the proliferation of all of these networks.

To survive as a free agent, you have to be a trustworthy person. You have to be a caring person. You have to be a person of incredible integrity. You have to be a person who helps others. People who thrive are the one's who are best at adding to the reservoir of social capital and the people who are treacherous, don't have integrity, aren't trustworthy, and end up failing in a free agent economy.

In my reporting, I found a huge number of small groups. These free agent nations, small clusters of independent workers who come together to help each other on their businesses and to give each other advice about life, are a form of social capital.

JD: What advice or what suggestions would you offer people who are thinking about becoming free agents? What should people consider before they make that choice?

DP: Well, the worst-case scenario is that you go back and get a real job. So the worst-case scenario is really the status quo.

The second thing is to recognize that becoming a free agent is more about your own personal desires. You have

DP: I think the biggest surprise was a big-picture surprise. When I started writing about this topic, I thought I was writing a very hard-headed account of the inexorable forces of information-age capitalism and how they were sending people to the periphery. This was about technology and it was a mega trend and very hard-headed.

Then after 70 interviews or so, no one breathed a word about the inexorable forces of information-age capitalism, and, instead, we are talking about values and emotions and those sorts of things. That was the biggest surprise—that so much of the individual explanations have relatively little to do with massive mega trends. These forces exist in the background. They are enablers, but the fundamental motivators are much softer things—freedom and authenticity and accountability and self-defined success and this yearning for doing work that matters.

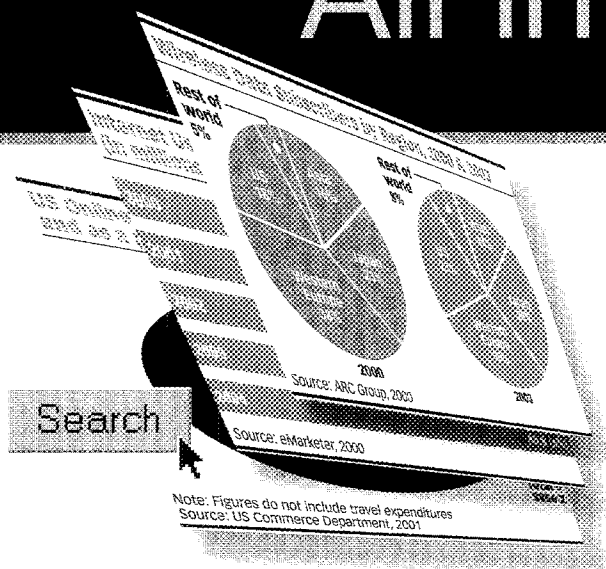
JD: How would you describe the free agent's information use and behavior as compared to people in more traditional work settings?

DP: That is a really interesting question. I haven't given it a lot of thought, but I do think that there are differences between what a person has to do when he or she is working independently versus when he or she is working for an organization.

When you work for yourself, you are the head librarian. You are the chief information officer. I think that the independent worker looks at information much more shrewdly than someone working in an organization.

It's not that people who work in organizations look at information shrewdly. But I do think someone working independently has to be much more shrewd about finding and evaluating information because they are not having anything handed to them.

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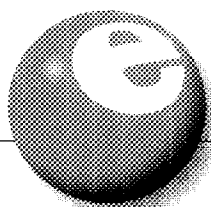
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So, if they have a question about something, they might go to a colleague, but they can't go to a corporate library and have the corporate librarian find it out. They have to find it out themselves.

So I think free agents are more conscious of the role that information plays in their lives. Since they are the gover-

They go back to work inside of a company, but they go back on very different terms because they understand their market value. They know they can survive without a corporate attachment. So they go back and strike better deals. They have more satisfying work arrangements, and I think that changes everyone else who remains in the organization.

"I think that free agency offers people an easier way to reconcile the demands of work and the demands of family, and I think that even in the most enlightened households, those sorts of demands press women more heavily than they press men."

nors of their own time and attention, they have to be much more strategic about how they parcel that time out.

JD: What impact, if any, has the rise of free agency had on those people who still remain inside organizations?

DP: I think it is definitely having an impact. First of all, it is showing people who remain inside of organizations a new set of possibilities for their own life and their own careers. It's prompting them to rethink their own affiliation and attachment with the organization, and to think about "If Sue left, why shouldn't I leave? What is it about Sue that got her to leave?"

As more and more people thrive in free agency, I think the people who remain inside of organizations will feel less dependent on the organization. At the same time, it is not that when you leave corporate America to go to free agent nation, you have to renounce your citizenship in corporate America. You are not like a defector from Cuba.

Instead, more and more people are going to be holding dual passports—one in free agent nation and one in corporate America—and they are going to migrate smoothly between the two worlds. This duality has a very profound effect on organizations and the people who remain in organizations because more people inside organizations have had the experience of being out on their own. I think that creates a fundamentally different relationship between these employees and their employers.

There are many free agents who go out on their own for a while and say, "You know, I don't like this" or "I am getting sick of it" or "I want to recharge my batteries."

JD: Do you think there is a market for information professionals trying to specialize in meeting the information needs of free agents?

DP: I think it is a very good business proposition because free agents are going through the same sorts of reasoning that companies went through 10 years ago where they say, "Oh, wait a second. I need to focus on my core competency." If your core competency is not information retrieval, but you need that for your business, it might make sense to outsource it. The best people to outsource to would be other free agents. So I think that is an extremely viable business proposition for information professionals who want to go out on their own.

Let's say that you are a great marketing person. Do you want to spend a couple of hours searching the web for a couple of facts when there is someone out there who knows how to operate every search engine, how to distinguish between what is a good fact and what is a wobbly one, and who can do the job in 15 minutes instead of the two hours you would spend doing it on your own.

JD: Do you think that Starbucks or Barnes and Noble or places like that have supplanted the role libraries used to play? Can libraries and the people who work in them serve as the knowledge brokers of the Free Agent Nation?

DP: I am not entirely comfortable with the trend of all public spaces and knowledge spaces being privatized because the great thing about America's system of public libraries is that anybody can go into it. The "free" is a very important and powerful point.

Starbucks is not free. Barnes and Noble is not free.

So I think the idea of people being priced out of entry, even though the entry is relatively small, is extremely dangerous.

Public libraries can become an essential part of the free agent infrastructure if they devote some of their physical space to something like free agent meeting places. Why

the crowd noise and overcome the pressure of playing in front of 40,000 screaming people. He told them to imagine a place where you would go to as a kid—a place where you felt more comfortable than any other place in the world. For some people it was a little nook in their house or apartment. For some people it was the back yard. For me it was a particular row in the enormous downtown

“When you work for yourself, you are the head librarian. You are the chief information officer. I think that the independent worker looks at information much more shrewdly than someone working in an organization.”

not meet at the public library or go to free seminars on how to run independent businesses? Libraries can be extremely powerful, not only as a repository of information, but also as a gathering spot for communities.

Many libraries are offering access to computers and the web. I think that is another powerful feature because some people cannot buy these means of production. But if you can't buy them, you can at least use them for free at the public library.

The idea that people are going to be priced out of the entry into these things is extremely dangerous. But if libraries see themselves as places that are designed to expand people's horizons—however we define that—that would be fantastic.

I don't necessarily love the idea of people doing their research at Barnes and Noble. I am not sure it is good for Barnes and Noble and I don't think that it is right for the individual. I would love to see libraries become these thriving gathering spots for free agents and everybody else.

I grew up [in Central Ohio] in a place where the public libraries were excellent, and they were essential in me becoming the person I am today. In my tiny city of 14,000 people, we had an incredible public library. When I wasn't playing baseball in the summers, I would be at the library. The library used to sponsor these things for kids in the summer where you would read a book and tell a librarian about it. Then you would have to read 10 books and they put your name on a board. It was great.

I was listening to an interview with Phil Jackson, the basketball coach, and he was talking about some of the techniques that he used to get his players to drown out

Columbus public library where there were all these books. You can sit there as an 8-year-old child or 10-year-old child and have this enormous amount of information and excitement right before you. There is truly nothing like that sensation.

JD: When you are not doing interviews or talks about free agents, what do you like to do in your spare time?

DP: I lead a very binary life because my wife and I have two little girls. When I am not working, I am in my role as a parent.

When I am a free agent, I love what I do. So it is not as if I am craving time to escape from work. I am the luckiest person in the world in that I am able to make a living by talking to people and writing about it. So I am absolutely grateful for that.

I have had almost no days where I said, “Oh, God, I don't want to go into my office today.” So I am very fortunate in that respect.

Then, when I am not in my office, I am chasing after children or being chased after by children.

Aside from that, I love to see movies with my wife and, since becoming a free agent, I have become a rather obsessive runner. I find long-distance running a cheap and effective form of psychological health.

In terms of my reading, I am a bit of a sucker for certain kinds of thrillers—gritty, location-based thrillers. I just finished reading Carl Hiaassen latest because I find Florida just such a funky place. I am also a big fan of George Pelecanos who writes about the seamier side of D.C. ●

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Tree Shaker: Shaffer's Path to SLA Filled with Challenge and Change



By Leslie Shaver

Leslie Shaver is the managing editor of Information Outlook. He can be reached at leslie@sla.org.

... Moving Two Steps Ahead of the Staus Quo.

WHEN PEOPLE SAY THEY FELL INTO THEIR CAREER FIELD, THEY USUALLY MEAN that by sheer accident or twist of fate they found a job that turned into a career. When Roberta Shaffer says she fell into becoming an information professional, she is speaking quite literally.

Shaffer was horseback riding during her first year of law school when Apaloosa, her riding companion for the day, threw her onto the ground. The injury forced her into a body cast (which required her to stand or lay prone) and caused her to take a yearlong hiatus from law school, where her aspiration at the time was to become a legal journalist.

"The horseback riding accident was an emotionally devastating experience for me because I adored law school," Shaffer said. "I had never the opportunity to see myself grow in such a way as I did in law school. But the accident really caused me to rethink a lot of my life."

Fortunately, Shaffer had strong parental support. Her father, a veterinarian who journeyed all over the globe helping developing countries overcome agricultural challenges, often accompanied her to physical therapy at Emory University in Atlanta, GA. During one session he visited the university's library and made a discovery that would change his daughter's career plans.

"He noticed some people running around the floor of the main library with sheets of paper in their hands," Shaffer said. "He thought, 'Well, they can't be librarians because librarians either sit at the reference desk or they sit on those high stools at the card catalogs.'"

Her father's curiosity finally got the best of him. He stopped one of the students milling about with paper in her hands and asked what she was doing. The student answered that she was a library school student taking a class in basic reference. Knowing that he may have found something for his daughter to do during her rehabilitation, the elder Shaffer cut to the chase.

"Do you have to sit down to be a library student?" he asked.

"If you major in reference, you really have to move around a lot," the woman said.

With his questions now answered, he ran back to Shaffer's room.

"I have the perfect thing for you to do this year," he told his daughter. "A journalist needs to do research. You will have that skill and you can apply it to being a legal journalist. It will be the perfect thing to do. You won't dwell on self-pity, and you will learn a lot."

The veterinarian's sales pitch worked. After going through Emory's program slightly out of sequence, Shaffer got her master's degree in library and information science. "I entered right in the middle of the quarter," she said. "So I had to take the advanced reference classes before I took the basic classes. It was a big challenge for me to do the catch-up myself, but I loved teaching myself to do research and reference work"

Shaffer eventually finished law school, but research became her new passion. "I loved research and I really loved being an information professional," she said. "I didn't think journalism could even come close to the satisfaction I got from research."

On The Move

To watch Shaffer at SLA headquarters in Washington, DC, is to see a person in constant motion. Whether leading the staff in early-morning stretches or meeting with any number of visitors, Shaffer is always on the go. As a matter of fact, the only staffer with more energy is Suzy Snowflake, Shaffer's 18-month-old West Highland Terrier.

Shaffer has always attacked life with this kind of energy.

"You wouldn't find me on a Saturday afternoon as an elementary school student curled up in the corner of my bedroom reading a book," she said. "You would probably find me outdoors, running around."

Her childhood exuberance was only matched by her curiosity.

"I was one of those kids who harassed her parents by always asking, 'Why?, Why?, Why?'" she said.

Her curiosity was fed by the different places she stayed as a child. When Shaffer's father got a grant to go to new part of the world, he took his family with him. "I saw a lot of the developing world in the '60s and '70s because my parents believed that the family unit was very important," she said. "My dad didn't want to be away from us for long periods of time when we were young children. And my mother believed that you could never be too young to be exposed to other cultures, religions, and languages."

This had a huge impact on her viewpoint of the world, both professionally and personally.

"I never assumed that the American way of problem-solving was the only way," she said. "I also realized that cultural differences drove many things ... what people eat, how people greet each other. Those are very important little things in interpersonal relationships that make a huge difference."

Into The Professional World

After graduating from Emory, Shaffer stayed in Atlanta and worked for Coca-Cola, where she was the corporation's first law librarian.

"This was at a time when the copyright law [which would ultimately be amended in the mid 1970's] was undergoing a lot of scrutiny, and all the librarians at Coke got together to work with the general counsel and the public affairs department to advocate something that would be positive for the company," she said. "It was a wonderful opportunity to understand corporate activism."

After leaving Coke, Shaffer returned to the academic world to finish her law degree at Tulane University at New Orleans, LA, and then teach research, writing, and reasoning, a required law course at the University of Houston.

Four years later opportunity knocked again. This time it was in the form of a newly created position at the Library of Congress. "Nobody who is a librarian would ever hear a call from the Library of Congress and not take it," Shaffer said. "I had always been rather fascinated with Washington

because it was the legal capital of the world. I had no reason not to take the job."

After four years in Washington, Shaffer received a Fulbright Scholarship to go to Israel and help draft that country's first constitution. "Israel had not had a constitution simply because it was part of the British Commonwealth, and Britain doesn't have a written constitution," she said. "But

they thought if they had a constitution, people would better understand their human rights policy."

While abroad, Shaffer also worked for the Ministry of Justice in Portugal, assisting in its campaign to enter the European Union. "What they were looking at was how their national law would harmonize with the European Community law," she said. "Overall, I had very different experiences, one with a legal change

that was necessitated by humanitarian reasons and another with legal changes in research that were necessitated by economic motivation."

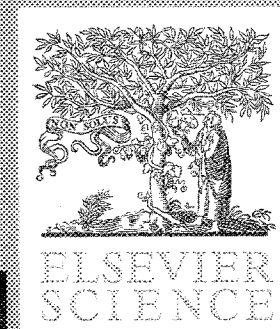
Shaffer found these experiences so exhilarating that she experienced a great letdown upon returning to the States.

As she had after the horseback riding accident, Shaffer used this experience to look inward and find what really made her tick. And, once again, what she found helped guide her into the future. "I learned that I am not the person to call if you want to maintain the status quo," she said. "I am much better as an innovator, a tree-shaker, and a change agent. Usually, I am shocked if I can stay somewhere for five years just because I like to come in and shake the tree. Once the tree has been shaken and the new structure is in place, I like to move on and give somebody else the chance to put the flesh on the bones. I guess I am always afraid of the status quo biting my heels."

Though Shaffer was not shaking many trees while she served as the acting law library director at George Washington, she made some waves away from work. This was around time of the battle over the Robert Maplethorpe at the National Endowment for the Arts and Shaffer armed with her library skills, decided to enlist in the fight.



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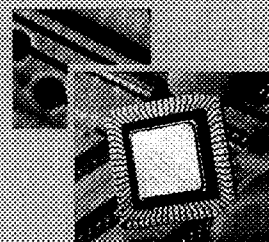


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"I could use my facility and highlight the National Endowment for the Arts and the Humanities' enormous contributions to American culture," she said. "If we hadn't had agencies like those in our society, we would not be as rich a nation as we are in culture, education, and ultimately in human relation."

After the position at GW ended, Shaffer moved back to the private sector, going to Covington and Burlington, a Washington-based law firm. The eight years in that firm's law library were her longest stint with any one organization—so far.

"The goal there was to be the best," she said. "We would have the best law firm law library in the country. We would have the best staff and the best services."

"So I stayed there for eight years, and there was a challenge for at least six of those eight years," Shaffer said. "In

fact, I may have overstayed. I may have gotten to the point where I had all the systems I wanted running and it became a maintenance job. I could no longer find the challenge that would let me shake the tree."

The next stop on Shaffer's itinerary was The University of Texas, where she became dean of the library school.

"I knew that library education needed a lot of tree-shaking," she said. "If library schools, library and information sciences in general, were going to continue to be a viable educational degrees, great changes needed to occur within the formal education and in who was recruited to those master's and doctoral programs."

She successfully opened the library school to Texas law-makers, the international community, and other schools on campus, but after two years the road beckoned once again. This time personal issues compelled her to move back to Washington and take the helm at SLA.

Back to Washington

Shaffer certainly was no stranger to SLA. She joined the association while a library student at Emory, but was never an active member.

"I never lost contact with SLA and I always continued to rely on their information and their conference," she said.

One of Shaffer's goals as executive director is to reach out to people like her—librarians who are members, yet are not necessarily active because their focus is on other associations.



"I have been in other professional associations," she said. "I see their problems, and I think that in some cases, we can take advantage of their lack of responsiveness to the new responsibilities of information professionals."

Shaffer's plan goes well beyond taking advantage of weaknesses in other associations. She wants to open up the lines of communication within SLA.

"I hope to facilitate exchange among

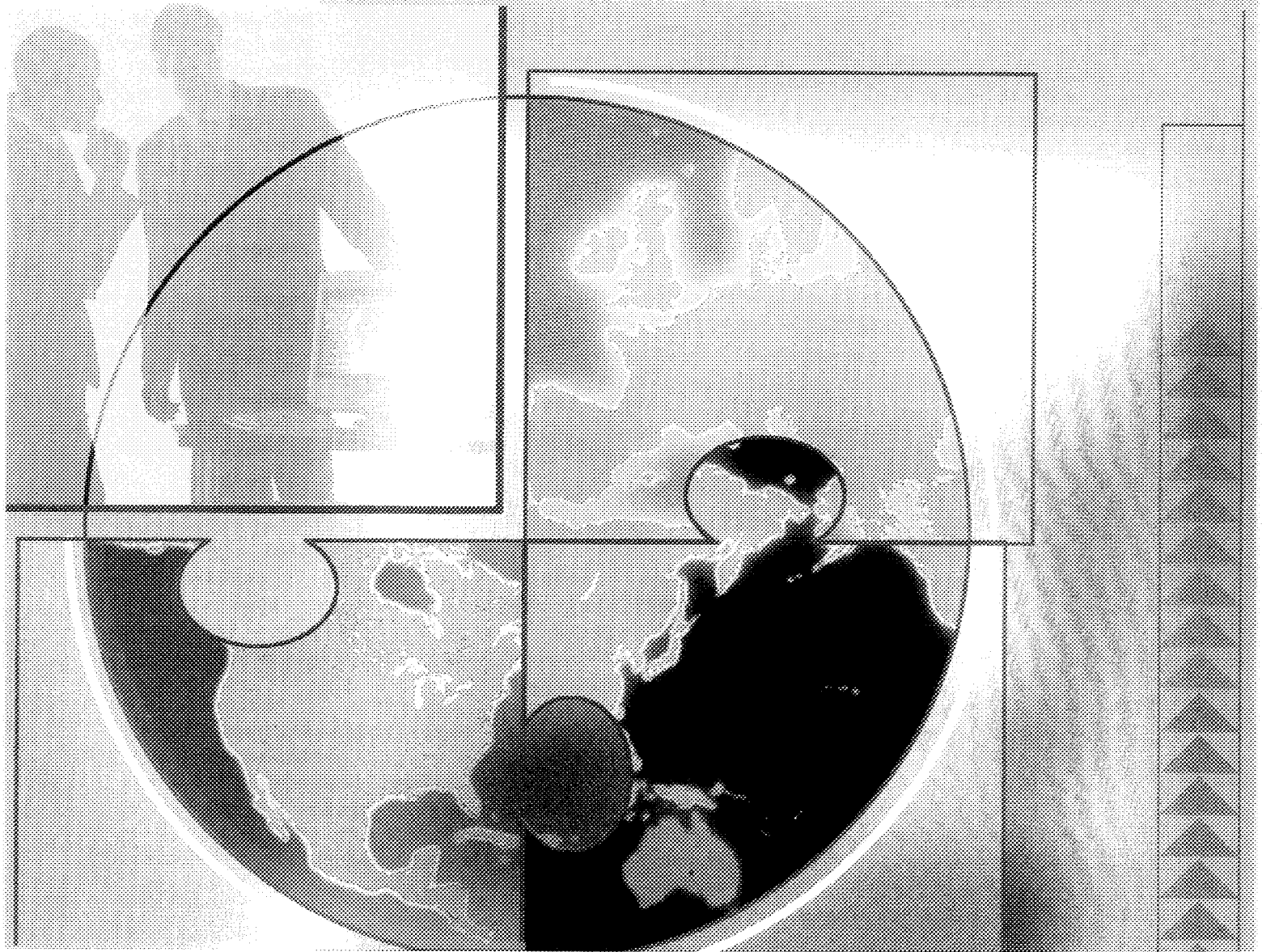
and between the divisions, chapters, and members of SLA because I really think that is one of our strengths," she said. "If we allow ourselves to be an organization that is really just a federation of silos, we will not reach our potential."

Shaffer would also like to bring more people into the profession, while keeping minimum competency standards. "I think we need to worry about recruiting people into the profession and being very open and embracing of people who don't have what we might have thought of 20 years ago as traditional skills of a particular education credential," she said.

Above all, Shaffer wants to see members benefit, both professionally and personally, from their affiliation with SLA.

"I think we need to make sure that our members and other people who are in the information profession have the right positioning so that their voice is not diluted," she said. "I want them to be the kind of people who have the communication savvy and the credibility to be key cabinet members in key organizations." ●

Strategic Decision Making in a Time of Information Overload



By Kathleen Begley Powe
and Dr. Daniel Plung

Kathleen Begley Powe, manages the SRS Library for the Westinghouse Savannah River Company in Aiken, SC. (kathleen.powe@srs.gov) She received her MLS from the University of Pittsburgh and an MS in History from Duquesne University.

Dr. Daniel Plung is employed as a senior manager at Westinghouse Savannah River Company in Aiken, SC. (daniel.plung@srs.gov) He also teaches Professional Communication at the University of South Carolina. He received his doctorate in English from Idaho State University.

... Choices Are Everywhere.

AS PROFESSIONAL LIBRARIANS, WE MAKE DECISIONS. WE CONTINUOUSLY address customers' needs, make operational choices, meet service demands, and integrate technological advancements, while fulfilling the most basic need of all—finding an answer. This quest for information challenges us with a constant stream of choices and decisions. And with the dynamic growth of electronic information and resources, the number of choices has grown exponentially. By the very nature of our jobs, most choices lead to more decisions. Choices made to satisfy our customers today, give us the opportunity to fill their needs tomorrow. Wise decisions keep us in business.

With all this practice, it would seem natural that librarians are equipped to make better decisions than most people. But repetition does not build judgement or strength, unless it is based on a firm and well-developed foundation. Understanding sound management practices and using clear, thoughtful planning is the basis for building effective operations and making valid, competent decisions. Matching and weighing the traditional library choices with an understanding and appreciation for the business framework in which it operates is the only way to maintain the library's existence and ensure its growth.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

There are two categories of decisions made within a library—interpersonal decisions made to meet customer needs (reference and directional services) and strategic decisions made to support library operations and growth (resource allocations, long range planning, facility optimization, etc.). While these categories influence and support each other, their drivers are not always the same. The consequence of these decisions influences the world in which the decisions are made. In other words, our customers' successes (as a result of library involvement) sustain and promote the organization, while positively influencing the customers' outlook on the library and their commitment to its future.

The library decisions must be reconciled and in concert with the influences and performance measures from the broader universe in which the library exists. Many quality library operations have been placed in jeopardy by assuming wise bibliographic decisions are synonymous with wise business decisions.

Librarians are trained to make decisions in the library universe. The training is founded on three basic principles: Basic Philosophy of Library Operation, the Meth-

odology for Choices, and Interlibrary Cooperation and Networking. These principles have always been a part of librarianship and are the operational tools for wise decision-making. But for the library to function effectively, justify continued support, and maintain its existence (with competition from other organizational elements fighting for the same funds), two additional principles from the business universe—the integration of internal and external influences and the assessment of value—must be used. Only with an understanding of these two principles can a library survive, grow, and direct its own future.

To ensure that a library understands sound management practices and uses clear, thoughtful planning, it is important to understand exactly what each principle is and how it applies to a particular special library. For comparison sake, I will use my library, which has four degreed professionals, a technical support staff of four, and an annual budget of approximately \$800,000. These principles apply equally to academic and public libraries because they all exist within an organization structured to financially survive and prosper.

Operating In The Library Universe Principle #1 - Basic Philosophy of Library Operations

A library must understand and define its role to lay the foundation for effective decision-making. In its most basic form, a library is resources and services built to serve its customers. Each of these basic building blocks has two components. Resources are comprised of the core collection and the method of delivery, while services are the delivery to customer and self-service options. While each of the four components will differ from library to library, the structure is sound only when each element has both independent and interdependent support within the library's operating philosophy. Each element functions

to support the next level. Without each supporting member, the whole structure is faulty.

This structural framework of a library can also illustrate operational and priority-based choices once the details of each element are identified and understood.

The details of the core collection must be designed for the customers' level of expertise and needs. For example, libraries must provide off-hours access to researchers working alternate shifts. Delivery methods and media choices are also important with a geographically diverse group of customers.

Our Special Library's Background and Experience in Relationship to Principle #1

Our special library, which mainly serves scientists and engineers involved in technical research at a government-owned, contractor-operated facility, had faced reductions in funding and staffing levels and changes in organizational reporting for several successive years. This left the staff alarmed, angry, and suspicious.

In response to these funding cuts we eliminated certain services and discontinued supporting or building the circulating and reference collection. All remaining funds were directed toward maintaining the periodical collection since it provided the most timely source of current information. Another change that accompanied the new organizational reporting was the

expansion of the customer base from a smaller research community to the entire company. The organization that originally administered the library had approximately 80 percent of the research staff, but represented less than 10 percent of the overall population.

At our library, experience with Principle 1 meant a realignment of the staff's thinking. The librarians' dissatisfaction with reductions translated into a belief that the library's importance was diminished. This resulted in poor customer support and an unwillingness to take ownership. Typical responses to library customers were "You have to do that by yourself" or "We don't do that." Not only did the customers leave empty handed (which all libraries recognize could happen every once in awhile), but they also left disgruntled and offended. While the staff's responses reflected its frustrations, they were also symptomatic of a deeper problem—one that lies rooted in both the library and the business universes.

To change the staff's attitude, the new manager concentrated on the library universe, implementing a three-part strategy.

Part A: All staff members were expected to provide resources and services for all customers, including those ill-equipped to use the growing array of research tools. The expectation is that the staff should respond politely, help as much as they can, and assist in securing information, even where an inquiry may extend to another staff

Resources		Services	
Scope of Core Collection	Media Delivery	Customer Service	Self Service
physical sciences	books	journal subscriptions	web site
natural sciences	periodicals	research	web subscriptions
business and management	microfilm	literature searches	web links
training	posters	resource identification	CD-ROM Network
chemistry	electronic/web	circulation	request forms
biology	videos	interlibrary loans	"Friends/Supporters of the Library"
nuclear sciences	CD-ROMs	page charges	newsletters
emergency management	microfiche	electronic subscriptions	new holdings lists
industrial safety	maps	commercial databases	bulletin boards
personnel safety	photographs	demonstrations and seminars	new materials shelf
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member or to another information resource in the corporation. Recognizing the service responsibility began the necessary repositioning.

Part B: We identified the elements in the basic library structure. Although the elements began to reflect the broader customer base, the existing resources did not. Services were limited to reference, interlibrary loans, and subscription services; no self-service options had been introduced. Identifying these kinds of support gaps was as important as identifying the activities that were disproportionately draining funds and staff energies.

Part C: Once the elements were identified (see chart), the third part of the strategic plan was implemented. The activities we focused on included:

- A detailed study of the tasks, assignments, and time spent on each task for every staff member.
- Formal revisions to library services procedure that described both services and access.
- The creation of an intranet web site with unlimited access privileges to broadcast our services and identify new electronic resources.
- An online request form for customers to use when they are away from the library or to use after hours.

Of these improvement activities, the most far reaching was the development of new staff assignments and more clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Each staff member completed detailed studies of their tasks, assignments, and time allocation. Continuous reviews and self-assessments fine-tuned the results. The individual results were then integrated, representing the most accurate depiction of work. The assessment highlighted inappropriate priorities, unproductive time, misaligned skills and assignments, duplicate activities, and activities with minimal benefit to customers or library operations. The staff's extensive involvement in the process ensured that the ensuing reorganizations, reprioritization of primary goals, and realignment of resources, were readily comprehended in both the business and library context. Realizing that the issues were not unsubstantiated opinion, arbitrary decisions, or general management animus, the staff now could begin to see what path needed to be followed.

Principle #2 - Methodology for Choices

Using the basic model of a library, the next step is to develop a sound methodology for making choices. Setting this in place can begin with the development and acceptance of a simple creed that the library staff and management support in concept and in fact, such as "We strive to serve the widest scope of customers' needs with the best resources and services, balancing and fulfilling the critical needs of the core collection, with careful consideration of budget constraints."

The creed simply states that when choices are made, they are made carefully and with a rigorously defined purpose and discipline. When each of the components is understood in depth, the creed can also define a management philosophy. The creed can be broken down into its separate components with explanations for the criteria necessary to make good decisions. Once the criteria is reviewed and understood, each library can use that experience to develop the next principle for making decisions.

Our Special Library's Background and Experience in Relationship to Principle #2 - Since all levels of staff at our special library did not initially agree with the basic mission statement, their energies and output had not served to build and strengthen the library. Without a consolidated perspective from which to view ideas strategically, library functions did not work together effectively or efficiently. Choices should have evolved naturally from an environment that encouraged and supported discussions, opposing opinions, and even disagreements. Instead, choices were believed to be random, serving individual operational agendas. The end result of this perception was usually frustration, poor obligation of funding, and ineffective support for the customers.

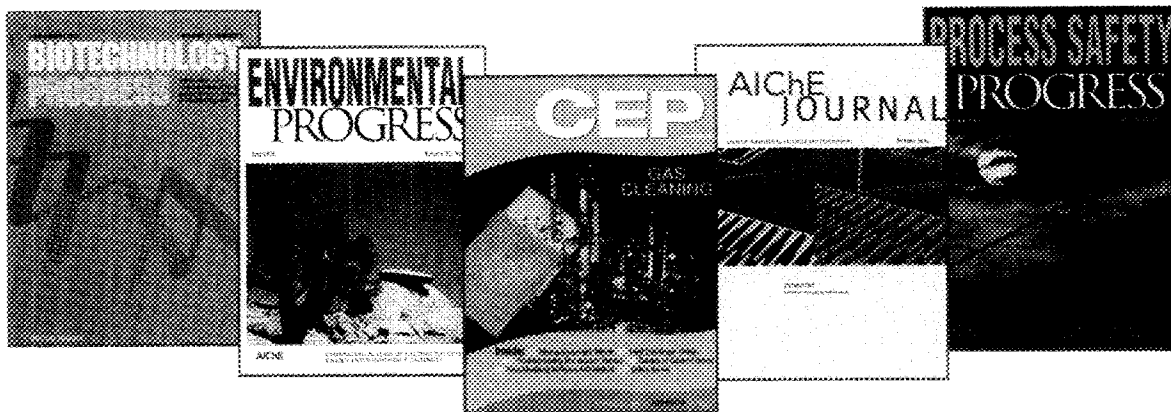
To alleviate the frustration in the decision-making process, the new manager implemented the simple library creed: reasons for decisions were carefully articulated, the interrelationship among decisions was explored, and regular interoffice communications were expanded. Using the creed as a basis and the analysis of assignments as an entry point, the manager fostered greater integration and interaction among librarians and staff. Though technical staff had not been contributing to the decisions of the librarians, they were brought into a common effort focused on improving the library's value and its probability of survival. Our dialogue produced solutions that helped us realize the four tenets of the library's creed.

Principle #3 - Interlibrary Cooperation and Networking

The first two principles in library management do not always guarantee the library will be capable of answering every customer request, especially with limited resources. Since needs and support can change frequently, a library must expand the interlibrary loan concept that libraries have traditionally relied upon. For example, establishing a cooperative agreement (either formally or informally) between local or regional libraries or outlets can make resources available that would either be too costly to procure individually or are only available in restricted or limited quantities. These outlets can include independent resource centers, file, and document centers within your own organization, traditional libraries in local or regional colleges and universities, training centers

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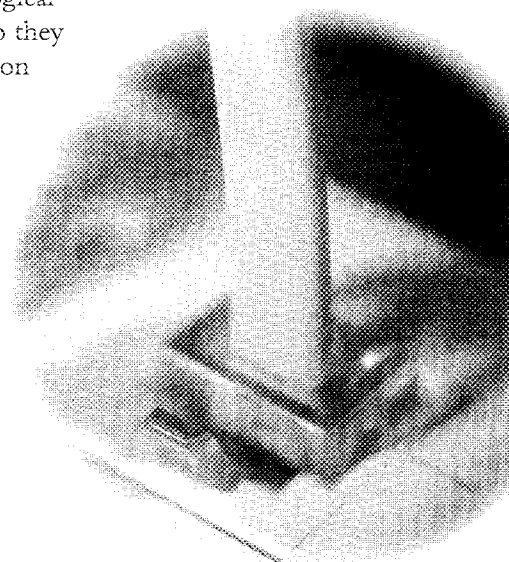
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and career development firms, and commercial partners and their parent organizations. The agreement can be as simple as a phone call between reference librarians or a consortium with shared access to catalogs and collections.

A second strategy could be to form a buying consortium. While the logistics are more demanding, libraries can evaluate how to minimize duplicate procurements and let their limited resources go farther.

Our Special Library's Background and Experience in Relationship to Principle #3 - The library staff and their previous management had always supported the practice of using interlibrary loans. The practice helped the library meet the needs of its customers when it was necessary to circulate material and became even more important when funding grew scarce.

The library also made a major change in its spending plan by allocating funds to grow the circulating and reference collections. The new reference librarian got subject-matter experts to help her analyze the current collection and make recommendations for needed materials. Customers also pitched in by purchasing materials with their departmental budgets and donating them for collective use.

Information providers also helped in the revitalization. One cooperative purchasing agreement with the Department of Energy allowed the library to gain access to more than 500 journals while it continued to pay the equivalent cost of procuring only 62 of these sources. It also began identifying and tracking the purchases made through independent corporate resources.

Operating In The Business Universe **Principle #4 - Internal and External Influences**

While libraries must establish the three key principles that define their operating universe, they must also reassess and renegotiate the two principles from the business universe. Becoming aware of the external influences that impact any decision—favorably and unfavorably—begins with an assessment of factors. To better understand this principle, try to envision the indirect or intangible factors that affect the library: business interests, budget and management goals, changes in business values, changes in the mission of the business, corporate politics, currency or longevity of corporate operations, the changing personality of management, growth potential, legal questions (e.g., copyright), technological advancements, training and expertise, regulatory controls, and the library's place and reputation organizationally.

Its internal influences include the staff's expertise and experience, working environment, flexibility (both individually and allowed or disallowed by corporate human

resources policies), and receptiveness to teamwork. While the external influences provide the broad stage, the internal influences define the work atmosphere and daily environment.

Once the influences have been identified, they need to be categorized under what the library can and cannot control. It is important that the library avoids the frustration that comes from applying force to an immovable object and identifies the appropriate level of energies that need to be spent. Once the critical factors are known, the library must identify strategies needed to create positive pressure on the external influences. For example, you can use your customer's strategic and long-range planning goals as an ally, or you can organize supporters who will be involved in strategic business decisions. The goal is to make customers aware of the library's intrinsic value. Using these influences to the library's advantage means survival; leaving the influences to reach their own conclusions can spell disaster.

Our Special Library's Background and Experience in Relationship to Principle #4 - The previous failures of the library to sustain itself can be linked to its unwillingness to define how to influence critical survival factors. We realized that information tailored to the needs of customers resulted in a better understanding of our decision-making process and the impact changes may have on the customers. By assessing the long-term needs of the library support, we defined a clear line of communication. We also made formal presentations to customers and to management that highlighted all the potential contributions—and consequences—of losing these capabilities. New services, changes in technology, and on-line availability of resources were across the company. Customer focus groups were also developed and integrated into the decision process. By providing time for discussions before action was needed and knowing the circumstances that make acceptance of change more palatable, the library improved communication, participation, and acceptance.

These efforts resulted in the formation of an advisory pool of customers. When operational needs arose, they could then be expected to plead the case for new equipment, purchasing support, and space. During several rounds of very heated negotiations on long-term reductions in corporate spending, upper management took a surprising stance by insisting that the library's budget either stay the same or increase. We customized the marketing of numerous key attributes of the library by:

- Highlighting the staff's expertise as trained, credentialed professionals
- Marketing the customers' experience, preferences, and training needs
- Leveraging the available technologies and applications

- to find the best delivery method (intranet)
- Reaching the most people in spite of geographical and facility constraints
- Using current and future technological advancements
- Understanding the security and classification requirements and controls
- Having the determination to find an alternate way to operate internally and to provide more direct connect between the customers and the library staff
- Using leveraged buying power with other organizations and/or sites
- Having the ability to find alternate sources for financial support

Principle #5 - Assessment Of Value

In the corporate world, the final measure of success for the library is whether it adds value. This is no different than the measure used to gauge the efficiency and efficacy of all business functions. Value is difficult for librarians to objectively deal with because we assume the library's users share our perception of the value of information. "Who would choose to survive the challenges of modern civilization without the availability of a trained team of information managers and researchers?" we ask. The answer often is that many companies are willing to try. When it comes to deciding whether to cut the research department by 10 percent or the library 100 percent, the final determination is whether the corporation recognizes—both empirically and intuitively—that the library is adding value.

We need critical reviews of individual resources through an engineered solution that can be communicated to business and technical management. This tool must translate into a direct assessment of value and give a sense, even though somewhat subjective, of the benefit versus the cost. Only with an understanding of benefit versus cost, can a library justify current spending and request future increases. Such a review needs to address five essential components—access, quality, perspective, media, and format.

Each of these components can be added to a report card and used to evaluate and compare resources. The final grade should reflect whether the value clearly outweighs cost, the value to cost ratio is positive, it is the best option available, and that the cost outweighs the value.

These single grade assessments allow for a clear and simple comparison among resources. They can also be used to assess trends and suggest future allocation. An

associated area that often figures prominently in the assessment of value is performance measures. In many organizations, performance measures are not only desirable, but required. Performance measures (derived from the report cards and the trending data it affords) provide statistically reliable pictures and projections. While we want to trust in our visceral comprehension of value, the corporate world demands that we provide a scorecard that is consistent with the way business scores are kept.

Our Special Library's Background and Experience in Relationship to Principle #5 - Our funding sponsors voiced concern with the cost of purchased electronic resources versus free resources (particularly the resources made available by the federal government's agencies). By defining the components of value—access, quality, perspective, media, and format—the library was able to compare one resource to another (i.e., cost versus value, and cost and performance over time). By assuring upper management that our choices were made with experience, expertise, and control, we built trust and confidence for the future. We then made this scorecard available in a number of different places so that personnel knew exactly how prudent and cost-minded we were. We aggressively demonstrated that our approach was a rigorous, disciplined, and documented strategy that added value to the library.

Conclusion - Universal Application

A library is a business. We are in the business of providing key information resources to our customers and we must operate using the prudent fiscal and managerial disciplines of the business world. Too many stories and anecdotes over the past decade or two have alerted us to the misfortunes of public and special libraries. The fundamental problem, as we ourselves came all too close to learning, is that to be in business, you have to be a business. The library that makes wise decisions is doing more than surviving—it is using good management practices and thoughtful business planning. Five principles make the difference: three make sure we keep our eyes on our job and two make sure we keep our eyes on the job we're in. Paying attention to the library universe and the business universe is not optional, it's essential. The good news is that the attributes that contribute to good choices in a library can translate directly into benefits when applied to the broader framework of library operations. Its best to remember that each decision can serve as a learning experience, whether or not it proves wise. Maintaining an understanding of the basic role of your library can support the thoughtful planning for operational objectives and justify the future of your library. ●

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Packaging Is the

Answer

by Steven Goldstein

When new technology or dramatic innovation is applied to an industry, tremendous growth typically follows. The supply of the industry's goods and services often rises substantially, thereby lowering prices and increasing demand.

Examples of this are everywhere. The agriculture revolution changed rural America from small, vertically integrated farms producing small quantities of a wide range of products to large, factory-like establishments producing tremendous quantities of very few products. The entire chain of food production became specialized, with the last link in the chain being packaging. Progress in food packaging gave consumers practically unlimited choices in food types and combinations.

While we have been living in the information age for many years, the information revolution was brought upon us by the emergence of the Internet. The supply of information or content available to information consumers has increased hundred-fold in the past five years as access to the World Wide Web has become universal. At the start of the revolution, industry analysts declared, "content is king" and that owners and creators of content would control the direction and profits of the budding, yet powerful media.

In many ways, what actually happened paralleled what occurred in the agricultural revolution. The supply of information, especially in the

consumer space, rose incredibly. But supply clearly outpaced demand, driving the price of once valuable information to practically zero. With low barriers to entry, everyone published something. Most published products were pushed onto web pages without any thought whatsoever to packaging.

In the business or professional information arena, similar analogies apply. Prior to the information boom, creators of information were vertically integrated—they collected and processed information, formatted it, developed applications to analyze it, and distributed it all by themselves. Just as in agriculture, the information industry has seen rampant consolidation. Some players have grown by acquisition, while others have grown organically to dominate various market segments.

The notable difference between agriculture and information is that packaging in food products is far ahead of information packaging in both sophistication and variety. The benefits of better information packaging have yet to reach the business information consumer. Although a much broader swath of information is now free to users via the World Wide Web, the free information is so poorly packaged and its accuracy so hard to assess that it is often ignored by information professionals.

Why the slow start? Prior to the Web, electronic information consumers operated as specialists. Lawyers, for instance, had their own libraries, their own content sources, and their own librarians to operate them. Pharmaceutical companies also had their own information specialists, many with scientific credentials.

The democracy of the Web created a growing society of information generalists whose absence of credentials does not hinder their access to basic legal or pharmaceutical information. Law firms publish freely on their own sites with the objective of marketing the firm's services to viewers. As the availability of information continues to grow, the difficulty of finding the good stuff—the gems among the rocks—also increases, along with the pressure of competition to find those gems. How information is collected, filtered, and packaged is as significant to success as the information itself.

Packaging is manifested in many ways: format, solutions, and integrations of content sets. Packaging can improve searching capabilities and per unit pricing, expedite the delivery of information, and the relationships between content sets.

Better packaging provides more options for the information consumer, including more choices of content, pricing, and simpler combinations of content and formats. Identical information can meet the needs of disparate users, depending on how the information is packaged.

A new formula has emerged, one that renders greater convenience, more choices, better pricing, and higher utility. Specialization within agriculture provided benefits to every part of the food chain. The information industry, too, will witness more sophistication as long-sought improvements through packaging are realized. Content is most meaningful and usable when it is derived from a substantial base *and* is packaged and sorted with the customer in mind. Packaging renders results that are precise and sensibly organized, which is just what the user seeks.

Steven Goldstein is co-founder, chairman, and chief executive officer of Alacra, Inc.

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Are You Making What You're Worth?

Information professionals in both Canada and the United States are making more than they did in 2000. This and other salary news comes straight out of SLA's newly released *2001 Salary Survey*.

2001 Mean and Median Salary Data Information professionals in Canada saw a 2.4 percent increase in median income (the salary in the middle of the distribution), while their colleagues in the United States enjoyed a healthy median increase of 10.9. Canadian respondents in the same positions between April 1, 2000, and April 1, 2001, reported an average (or mean) percent change of 4.7 percent in earnings. The mean reported change for similar U.S. respondents was 6.6 percent.

The median pay for full-time information professionals in Canada as of April 1, 2001, was \$55,344 and the average was \$57,904 (Canadian salary data is reported in Canadian

dollars). The U.S. median pay for full-time information professionals was \$54,500 and the mean was \$58,930. Results from the 2001 SLA data for Canada and the United States are presented separately.

The inflation rates for Canada were 3.6 percent, while the United States was slightly lower at 3.3 percent.

Survey Administration

2001 was the fifth straight year SLA conducted its salary survey. This was the fifteenth survey since 1967. In early April, 2001 SLA mailed questionnaires to a random sample of less than half of the U.S. membership and to all of the regular and associate Canadian members. This was a total of 4,745 surveys. Members returned 2,339 surveys to Association Research, Inc. (ARI). As in prior years, data from the 2001 salary survey was entered and tabulated by ARI to ensure respondent confidentiality.

After eliminating the 73 surveys returned for incorrect addresses, the completion rate for the 2001 salary survey was 50.1 percent.

Organization of the 2001 Salary Survey Report

Data about the United States and Canada is separated so that all tables relevant to each country are grouped together. Chapters one through five include Canadian data, while chapters six through ten are comprised of U.S. data.

The data within each chapter is divided into three sections: demographic, institutional, and job-specific. Demographic data relates to personal characteristics of the respondent, institutional data relates to characteristics of the respondent's employer, and job-specific data relates to the particular job held by the respondent.

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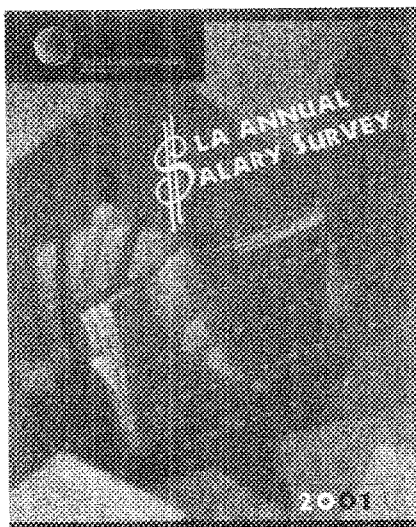
SLA's 131-page *Salary Survey* provides salary breakdowns by industry, geographic region, budget size, primary responsibility, job title, number of employees supervised, years of experience, and level of education, as well as summaries of historical median and average salary data.

Distribution of salaries for all Canadian and US respondents.

2001 Basic Annual Salaries: Canada and the United States

	Salary					Number	Mean	Percent change Mean Percent Change
	10th Percentile	Quartile 25%	First Median 50%	Quartile 75%	Third 90th Percentile			
All Canadian Respondents*	42,000	47,000	55,344	65,000	77,325	334	57,904	4.7%
All U.S. Respondents	37,118	44,000	54,500	69,150	85,596	1,683	58,930	6.6%

*All salaries in Canadian tables are reported in Canadian dollars. The exchange rate on April 1, 2001 was \$1.57 Canadian = \$1 U.S.



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all about drucker

The Essential Peter Drucker

by Bruce Rosenstein

The SLA's motto, "Putting Knowledge to Work," could also be the personal calling card for Peter Drucker.

Drucker, the keynote speaker at the 2002 SLA annual conference in Los Angeles, CA, is in many ways the ultimate "knowledge worker." In fact, he coined that term more than 30 years ago and has been writing about the related topics of knowledge and information since the mid-1960's.

His recent collection, *The Essential Drucker*, has dozens of pages about knowledge and information, and most of it is directly applicable to our work as librarians and information professionals. Reading through Drucker's works on these topics provides an almost Biblical feel. If we read them over and over and apply them in daily life, we cannot help but be more adept in our work.

Drucker stresses that knowledge workers should be effective within their organizations. The knowledge (or information) itself is not enough. In his 1967 book, *The Effective Executive*, Drucker says knowledge workers who make proper, effective contributions are executives, whether or not they are part of top management. In a chapter from 1999's *Management Challenges for the 21st Century*, he makes the bold statement that the concept of managing oneself "demands that each knowledge worker think and behave as a chief executive officer."

One of the most valuable writings for information professionals in *The Essential Drucker* may be the chapter titled "The Information Executives Need Today." (The article comes from his 1995 book *Managing In a Time of Great Change*.) In this chapter, he says "... information has to be organized so as to question and challenge a company's strategy. To supply data is not enough. The data have to be integrated with strategy, they have to test a company's assumptions, and they must challenge a company's current outlook."

He goes on to say that online databases are not sufficient on their own because they provide answers, but do not ask questions. "What we need," Drucker writes, "are services that make specific suggestions about how to use the information, ask specific questions regarding the user's business and practices, and perhaps provide interactive consultation."

In Drucker's world, the necessary information is outside the organization. It is our task to find it, organize it, and make it meaningful.

When working with others, we must determine what information we owe and in what form it needs to be. This concept may be second nature to SLA members, but we may also ask ourselves how it is consistently done in

our organizations.

The section "Information Challenges" from *Management Challenges for the 21st Century* should also be required reading for everyone in SLA. It describes the relationship between connecting data, information, and computers, and how they relate to our organizations: "...Information technology," he writes, "has centered on data — their collection, storage, transmission, presentation. It has focused on the 'T' in 'IT.' The new information revolutions focus on the 'I.' They ask, 'What is the meaning of information and its purpose?'"

A particularly important part of this book analyzes knowledge worker productivity. He has often been harsh in his judgments about how productive knowledge workers really are. He details six factors in productivity, including determining the task, imposing responsibility and granting autonomy, building continuous innovation into the work, continuous learning and teaching, quality beats quantity, and the knowledge worker should be treated as an asset rather than a cost.

Carefully reading and understanding Drucker's thoughts on information and knowledge will help us develop a greater appreciation for our work.

Bruce Rosenstein is a librarian at USA TODAY and an adjunct professor at The Catholic University School of Library and Information Science. He can be reached at broenstein@usatoday.com.

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copyright corner

Academic Freedom v. Anti-Circumvention

By Laura Gasaway

Reports of a Princeton University computer scientist who responded to an invitation from the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) to test its Secure Digital Musical Initiative (SDMI) have raised concerns in the research and scientific communities. SDMI is a consortium of parties interested in preventing piracy of digital music, and it is working to develop and standardize technologies that give music publishers more control over what consumers can do with purchased recorded music.

Dr. Edward W. Felten is an associate professor of Computer Science at Princeton University. He and his research group sued the Record Industry Association of America (RIAA) for chilling his right to scientific speech.

The RIAA issued a public challenge to the entire Internet world to try to crack the technologies it proposed to use to protect digital music from copyright infringement. Felten notified the association (via its website) that he accepted the challenge to remove the digital watermarks and crack the security technologies. His group successfully reverse-engineered the four audio watermarking technologies within a short time. Felten said that his technologies would ensure, "no public watermark-based scheme designed to thwart copying will succeed."

Dr. Felten and his research group (now referred to as the Princeton 12) then did what academic researchers normally do. They wrote up their

findings in a scientific paper and submitted it to the peer-reviewed the Usenix Security Conference. The paper was presented at the August conference.

The RIAA then sent Felten a letter and threatened to sue if he presented the paper or published it, charging a violation of the anti-circumvention provision of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, despite the fact that it had invited and even specifically authorized Felten to attack their technologies. Felten withdrew from the conference citing fear of suit as the reason. News of RIAA's heavy-handed tactics caused considerable concern and debate among academics and researchers, especially since Felten's work could be defined as "legitimate encryption research" under the DMCA and because RIAA had invited such research.

Assisted by the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), Felten and the others filed suit against the RIAA. The basis of the suit is a declaratory judgment that presentation of the scientific paper will not violate the DMCA since they have a First Amendment right to publish their research. The suit asks the court to overturn the anti-circumvention provisions of the DMCA as unconstitutional restrictions on freedom of expression. In July, the RIAA filed a motion to dismiss the suit, saying that its letter to Felten was not meant to be threatening and that it would not sue if the information was published.

On August 15, 2001, the paper was published at the Usenix Security Conference with permission of RIAA and other relevant groups. The lawsuit has not been dropped because these groups continue to insist on

veto power over the ongoing work and future publications of the Princeton 12.

The issues raised by this suit are quite serious for researchers, especially in the area of Internet security. Matthew Blaze, a research scientist at AT&T Laboratories, who filed a declaration in the Felten suit, said that scientific and engineering researchers rely on the open publication of knowledge to communicate with others and to gauge progress in the field. Conferences, such as the Usenix Security Conference, are critical if scientists are to have the results of others on which to build the development of new knowledge. Prohibitions on discussions and publication of security vulnerabilities greatly harm researchers and scientific advancement. According to Blaze, criminal organizations are not stymied by such restrictions, and there is considerable reason for concern if legitimate researchers are not permitted to study, learn, and fix vulnerabilities that are visible to criminals. The Computing Research Association stated that "the action by RIAA represents a clear and immediate threat to the healthy conduct of computer systems research."

The anti-circumvention provisions of the DMCA¹ have been controversial among the academic community, but content providers and the courts have cited them with approval. The prohibition against distribution of circumvention devices are particularly troubling in the area of cryptology and security research since such distribution could include publication of research results. In fact, some security researchers are reluctant to engage in the study of vulnerabilities of security systems because of a fear that they will be unable to publish their research result—a truly chilling effect of the DMCA, which was bolstered by RIAA's action with Felten.

¹ See *Copyright Corner* in INFORMATION OUTLOOK June, 1999 & January, 2001.



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irc notes

Communities of Shared Practices

One of the undisputed benefits of SLA membership is the opportunity to network with your industry colleagues. As information professionals, we are almost unique in our ability to understand both technology and information. Discussion lists, chat rooms, message boards, and the like combine to create great networking opportunities, but how should we make best use of these virtual communities?

Etienne Wenger's conversation with Jeff De Cagna in July's *Information Outlook* gives an interesting insight into communities of practice, which he defines as "a group of people who share an interest in a domain of knowledge." He explains that the members of the community will interact with one-another, engage with one-another, talk with one-another, think with one-another, and develop relationships with one-another. You only have to subscribe to the solo librarians discussion list to understand how librarians interact, engage, and talk with one-another. While these interactions do create networks, one wonders whether these are communities yet. I doubt it. I do not know what goes on between members offsite, whether they think together and develop relationships. The networking is easy, but the truly rewarding bit is the creation of a community, which is an ongoing experience of sharing, learning, and developing relationships.

In this month's "Executive Outlook," Hope Tillman refers to both the important role we have to play in sharing information and the best practices

initiatives set up on Virtual SLA. I have to say that I have a slight problem with the term, "best practices," which implies something is better than something else. My best practice may not be the best one for you. I like to think of them as shared practices. But whatever we call them the SLA community needs to use and develop them as part of the benefits of the community. The Leadership Knowledge Center for Association Units (www.sla.org/content/leadership/lkc/index.cfm) is a database of best practices added to the database by various chapters and divisions. It includes useful examples of procedures, policies, and experiences. These include "Thinking Outside the Box for Fundraising," "Chapter/Library School Relations," and "Membership Survey." These shared practices help members manage the association, but there needs to be a similar database of shared practices to help us all become indispensable in our organizations.

We are all trying to do more with less, so let's avoid reinventing the wheel. Share your accomplishments in becoming a smart information center. Today's operating environment leaves little room for information professionals who cannot turn trends and challenges into current practice and opportunities for their customers. The information market is becoming a market only for the most fit and SLA members should be striving for gold medal. We have the makings of an impressive support team within the members and HQ staff. The Smart Information Centers' Circle of Excellence (www.sla.org/content/interactive/knowledge/bestpractice.cfm) is being reviewed and will be relaunched to provide a vehicle for capturing the wisdom of SLA members and developing the community of practice beyond networking.

Wenger talks about the community of practice within an organization, but we can expand it outside the

organization to a global community. This community can be very powerful because, at its core, it is a group of practitioners who have taken on the responsibility of managing knowledge in their areas of expertise. Since the community is outside the organization, the two databases mentioned above bring together the practices to be shared, but they are only a small part of the whole community. It is the practitioners who know how to manage knowledge in their areas of expertise. By sharing this knowledge, the power of the community can be harnessed and released. At SLA we are often faulted for not doing enough to promote the value of the information professional, but what could be a better way than by facilitating a community, the shared experience of which can make our members indispensable.

Management Documents Collection

The Management Documents Collection (MDC) at SLA's Information Resources Center (IRC) is a prime example of how best practices have been shared by SLA members for many years. The MDC is comprised of sample policies, user surveys, and marketing materials, collected from SLA members over the years. Unfortunately, "over the years" means that some of the folders are far from being current. Please send the IRC recent electronic or print examples of MDC topics from your organization. Go to Virtual SLA at <http://www.sla.org/content/Shop/Loan/MDC.cfm>, and pay particular attention to acquisitions & collection development policies, fees for service policies or brochures, floor plans, mission statements/strategic plans, or user surveys. The names of your organization can be deleted if required.



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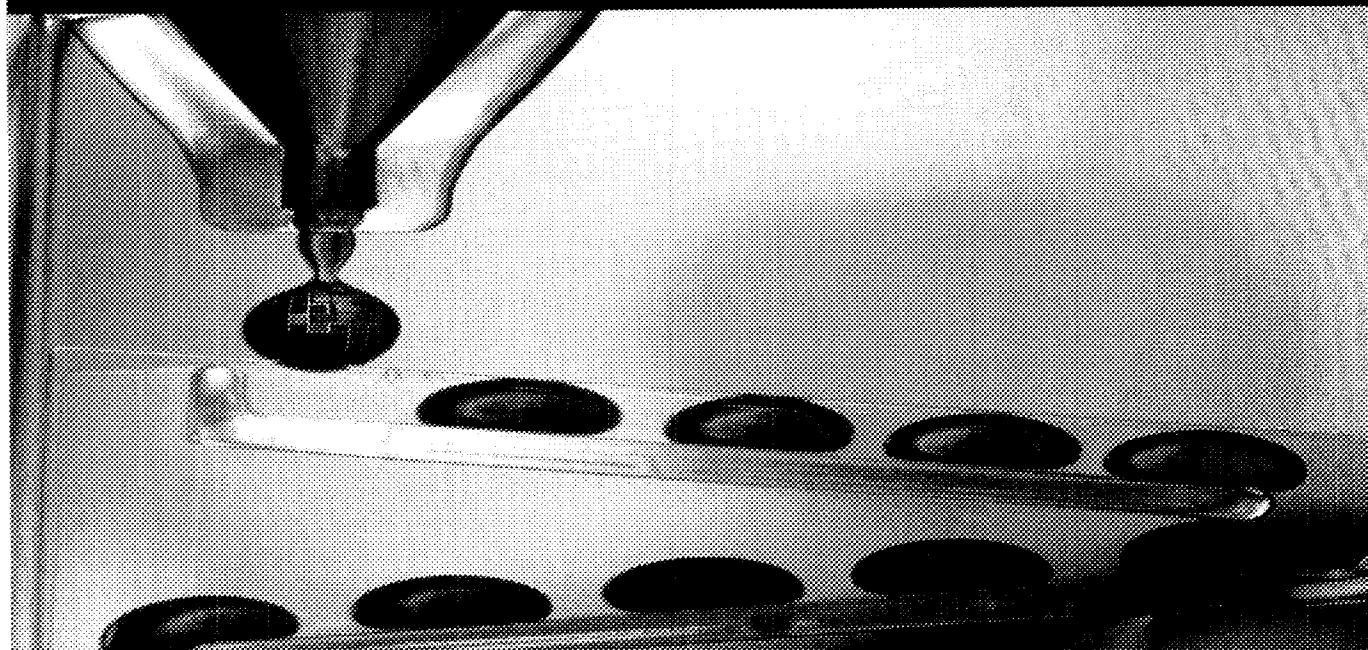
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Raising Your Profile at Work!

Effective steps to get you noticed by your boss and colleagues

The scenario frequently plays out in companies across the globe. You have been with your organization for several years now. You are considered a team player with excellent job performance, but no one really knows you exist. In meetings your boss overlooks you and your colleagues don't take your suggestions seriously. Recognition seems to always pass you by. Out of frustration, you ask: "What do I need to do to get someone in this organization to recognize my value and take notice of my skills while keeping my dignity?" This is a question that many workers ponder. How many times have you come up with a great idea or suggestion only to let it slip away because you were unable to make your pitch? Maybe it is fear of rejection or a lack of openness in your company that stopped you from taking the initiative to speak up. Identifying your problem is simple. Finding the solution is difficult, but not impossible. Here are a few effective steps that will help you raise your profile and make people take notice of you.

Become a leader

This is one of the most effective ways to raise your profile in any organization. I know, it is easier said than done, especially if you lack the charisma. However, people tend to follow those who demonstrate a strong belief or commitment for a common goal. You can easily motivate and inspire others when you

lead by example. People are always looking for someone or something to rally behind if the message is clear and the goal is attainable.

Play a larger role

Take the initiative and volunteer for assignments that go beyond your normal job responsibilities. Explore opportunities that will allow you to take on some risk but also reward you for your accomplishments. Take ownership of a project from its inception to its completion. Volunteer for assignments that no one else in your organization wants. Promising good work but delivering great work will help you exceed expectations. It also does not hurt to get involved in company-wide activities that are non-work related, such as community charities.

Get published

This is another great way to display your talents. Look for ways, through print media or television, to get your organization's name in the public eye. This recognition can build your stature and get you noticed. It is also great PR for the organization and it's free. But remember that it is important to share all of your ideas and thoughts with your communications department and direct supervisors before proceeding.

Foster friendships in the workplace

You can never have enough friends, especially in the workplace. Good communication with co-workers builds trust and cohesiveness. You can get a lot of useful information or advice especially if they trust and depend on you for your knowledge and expertise.

Communicate with your boss

This one may be a little tough. Many of us have a hard time communicating with our supervisor on any level. Start to develop a rapport by discussing things such as your needs on the job, the work environment, new ideas, and suggestions. In the long run, you will discover that these talks help him or her find out more about you than any project update.

Facilitate training sessions

Schedule a few training sessions throughout the year. Use them to demonstrate your area of expertise, show off your knowledge of the organization, and explain what you do and the value you add. Entertain questions from your co-workers during these sessions. The meetings will show your worth by demonstrating your company's return on its investment.

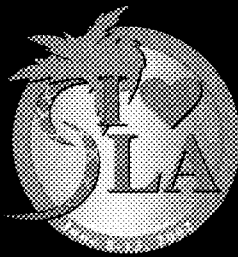
Become a jack of all trades

A wise man once said, it is better to know a little about everything instead of knowing a lot about one thing. The time may come when you are asked to step in a job that you are not familiar with. Take advantage of every opportunity to learn about other areas in your organization. In the long run, it is better to be a well-rounded individual.

Document and share your work

This should become second nature. Keep a summary of the work you complete for your own reference and share it with your co-workers. Many of your projects may have a direct effect on their responsibilities.

You may also need to go back and take a look at something you've done in the past. Consider teaming with different departments to pool resources, which will save the company money. If you stand up, you will be counted. Whoever coined the phrase "It's better to be seen and not heard," obviously wasn't an information professional.



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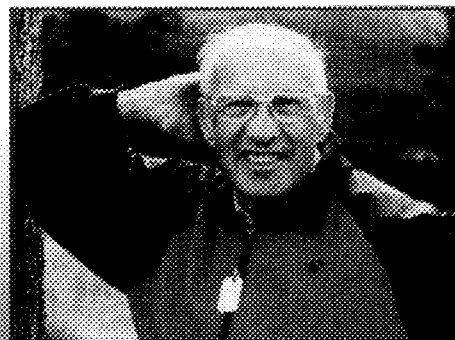
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strategic learning outlook

Youth Revisited: Finding The "Light Bulb" Moments

"View the work that you do through the eyes of a child. The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new lands, but in seeing with new eyes." - Marcel Proust, French novelist

I recently revisited my childhood, and what I found changed my opinions on many things, including learning.

My journey began one Saturday morning, when I stumbled across an interesting cartoon on television. As I watched the first few minutes of the program, I was aware that my cartoon-watching years were beyond me. But I was captivated by the cartoon show, which starred a mystery-solving puppy. The canine Sherlock Holmes and his human Watson counterpart wove a delightful story, full of hints that led the viewer down a winding, mind binding road. By the end of the show, I morphed into an active learner and solved the case. Not only did I learn new concepts, but I also remembered how to find solutions.

I was amazed at how this cartoon was representative of the learning process. As novices, we are sometimes led down dark and confusing pathways and given fragmented clues that force us to explore the far reaches of our imagination. With more experience, we will eventually reach our "learning" destinations. The more skilled we become in acquiring and applying knowledge the

farther we move away from accidental learning or what my mother calls "light bulb" moments. We often forget about the importance and excitement of learning in our daily work. But these moments of genuine insight help us to simplify and face the challenges of life: to solve the case. We should cherish them.

In a way, the work we do on SLA's Strategic Learning Team is like the work of that sleuth puppy. We inspire "light bulb" moments. For almost two years, the goal of "helping information professionals become indispensable through learning" has driven our team. I've heard from many of you who enjoy reading about our work and support our efforts to make "way cool" learning happen. Some of you have even said that our goal was ambitious. We agree. That's why we work each day to provide the clues and insights necessary to make this vision a reality.

How can you recapture the excitement of learning? How can you create a "light bulb" moment? Here's one example. Take a minute to write down your title and job description. Then call a friend who is not familiar with your work. Read that job description to

your friend and ask him or her to summarize what they heard. Is this an accurate explanation of the work you do each day? If the answer is no, it probably won't be long before you've re-focused your work on what's really important.

A chat with my twelve-year-old nephew, Tim, helped me reach this kind of clarity. He asked a series of questions about "exactly what I do all day." By the end of his interrogation, I was the person who "helps to make learning happen." That was a powerful moment. His newfound awareness and appreciation of my work gave me a new understanding of learning. I had put my myriad job responsibilities into a single kernel of truth. It was a "light bulb" moment and I will never see my work in the same way again.

I hope you agree that life's "light bulb" moments are essential to us. SLA's Strategic Learning Team is proud to help you learn and appreciate these moments. Our pride and energy are drawn directly from our desire to help you achieve great things in your life. Your successes are our moments in the light.

As you continue to learn, we invite you to share your experiences with us, especially your "light bulb" moments. Please contact us at learning@sla.org with the new insights that allow you to see your world and your life "with new eyes."

Start off the new year right! Discover your own "light bulb" moments in Chicago, Illinois USA this January.

+ SLA's first SLA Knowledge Forum is quickly approaching. When you attend our regional Knowledge Forums, you will set the learning agenda and explore only the most important issues in concert with other powerful thinkers. To find out more or to register for the Knowledge Forum to be held in Chicago, visit <http://www.sla.org/content/learn/withcolleagues/knowledgeforums.cfm>.

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making news

sla news

SLA CALLS FOR AWARDS & HONORS NOMINATIONS

If you have a nomination for the 2001-2002 Awards and Honors Program, you must have it in the mail by December 7, 2001. The only exceptions are nominations for the International Special Librarians Day Award, which must be received by May 18, 2001.

Since 1948, SLA has used its Awards and Honors Program to recognize standouts in the information profession. Award winners will be chosen by select committees and approved by SLA's Board of Directors at the SLA Winter Meeting in Chicago, IL, January 24-26, 2002. The winners will be announced after the Winter Meeting and officially recognized at SLA's 93rd Annual Conference in Los Angeles, CA, June 8-13, 2002.

SLA chapters, divisions, caucuses, and individual members can submit nominations. Only SLA members in good standing may be nominated for an award (the exceptions are the Professional Award, Honorary Member, and Media Awards). For complete listings and descriptions of all SLA Awards and Honors, committee information, or a PDF version of the SLA Awards and Honors Brochure, visit Virtual SLA at www.sla.org.

The H.W. Wilson Company Award goes to the author of the best article

in *Information Outlook*® during the 2001 publication year. The Factiva 21st Century Competencies in Action Award requires a separate application, which can be acquired by contacting Barbara Burton by phone at 1.609.627.2341 or email at barbara.burton@factiva.com.

SLA Awards and Honors nominations should be sent directly to the Public Communication Department at SLA's International Headquarters. To request an award nomination form or a brochure, contact Anthony Blue at 1.202.939.3633 or email: anthony@sla.org.

member news

Lettis Takes New Position

Lucy Lettis, a principal at Andersen (formerly Arthur Andersen), has been appointed to the newly created position of Director of Business Intelligence. The position reports to Andersen's new Center for Strategic Innovation, headquartered in New York. The Center is a market-oriented "idea center" that focuses on senior executive issues by exploiting

innovative business knowledge and original research. In her new role, Lettis will work on establishing, managing, and integrating the global research agenda for Andersen. Her particular concentration will be on competitive positioning of the firm's thought leadership activities and the identification of new market opportunities. Lettis was formerly director of Andersen's Business Information Network and the AskNetwork, a fee-based information services consultancy.

INFO PROS IN THE PRESS

Inc.'s Posse Corral Business News

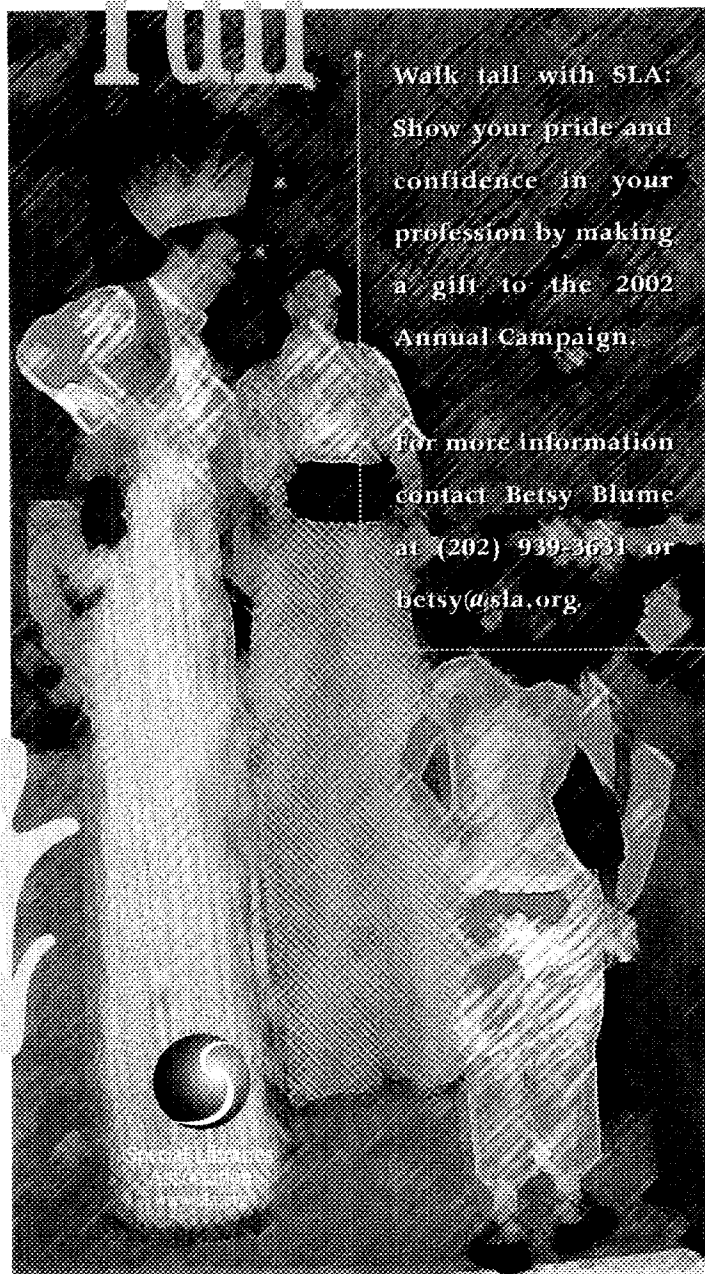
A group of five special librarians (and SLA members) at the business *Inc.* magazine emerged from behind the scenes in the October 16, 2001 issue. The librarians, dubbed "The Posse," were acknowledged for their work monitoring "the good, the bad, and the ugly in the world of business publications." The magazine also acknowledged the importance of information professionals in general, saying that "Corporate librarians act as filters and resource consultants for companies that are struggling to overcome information overload."

Inc.'s Posse includes Genevieve Foskett, corporate librarian at Highsmith Inc.; Lisa Guedea Careño, library director at Goshen College; Christine Klein, director of knowledge and information management at Lifecare Inc.; Jean Mayhew, director of information and learning at United Technologies Research Center; and Lisa Zwickey, senior research specialist at J.J. Keller & Associates.

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events

November

**Partners & Connections
Research & Practice**
Library Research Seminar
November 2-3, 2001
College Park, MD, USA
[http://www.asis.org/
Conferences/am01.html](http://www.asis.org/Conferences/am01.html)

**American Society of
Information Science and
Technology**
ASIST 2001 Annual Meeting
November 3-8, 2001
Washington, DC, USA
[http://www.asis.org/
Conferences/am01.html](http://www.asis.org/Conferences/am01.html)

ACM CIKM
10th International Conference on
Information and Knowledge
Management
November 5-10, 2001
Atlanta, GA, USA
[http://
www.cikm2001.cc.gatech.edu/](http://www.cikm2001.cc.gatech.edu/)

Online Inc.
E-Content 2001
November 12-13, 2001
Santa Clara, CA, USA
<http://www.econtent2001.com/>

December

Learned Information
Online Information 2001
December 4-6, 2001
London, UK
[http://www.online-
information.co.uk/online/](http://www.online-information.co.uk/online/)

Tempered Radicals:
Change Agency in the 21st
Century Organization
Virtual Seminar Series
December 5, 2001
Boston, MA, USA
[http://www.sla.org/
content/Events/strategic/
index.cfm](http://www.sla.org/content/Events/strategic/index.cfm)

2002 and
Beyond

SLA Winter Meeting
January 24-26, 2002
Chicago, IL, USA
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Events/index.cfm](http://www.sla.org/content/Events/index.cfm)

Knowledge Forum
January 25, 2002
Chicago, IL, USA
[http://www.sla.org/
calendar/](http://www.sla.org/calendar/)

**Innovating Information
Services**
January 26-29, 2002
Chicago, IL, USA
<http://www.sla.org/calendar/>

**SIA 93rd Annual
Conference**
Putting Knowledge to Work
June 8-13, 2002
Los Angeles, CA, USA
[www.sla.org/content/Events/
conference/2002annual/
index.cfm](http://www.sla.org/content/Events/conference/2002annual/index.cfm)

**The International Federation
of Library Associations and
Institutions (IFLA) General
Conference and Council**
August 18-24, 2002
Glasgow, Scotland
www.ifla.org

**2nd South Atlantic Regional
Conference**
September 22-24, 2002
Asheville, NC, USA
<http://www.sla.org/calendar>

Innovating Information Services
January 26-29, 2002
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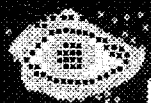
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